



Please replace claims 3 and 5-8 with the following:

3. The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein each of said number of elongated beams includes an upper surface defining said stationary transfer surface.

5. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein each of said number of elongated beams includes an upper surface defining said stationary transfer surface.

6. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein each of said second plurality of elongated forks includes an upper surface configured to support the article as it is pushed by said pusher mechanism thereacross.

7. The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said upper surface of each of said second plurality of elongated forks is situated at or below said stationary transfer surface.

8. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said extension fork assembly includes means for supporting a free end of each of said number of elongated forks, and said drive mechanism is connected to each of said number of forks at an opposite end thereof.

Please add the following as new claims 16-18:

16. The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said upper surface of said number of elongated beams is curved.

17. The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said upper surface of said number of elongated beams is curved.

18. The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said means for supporting includes a roller assembly.